



Terms and conditions for artists

20th Buskers Bern, Thursday-Saturday, August 10-12, 2023

Performance times

- The festival lasts for three days: Thursday, Friday and Saturday, from 18h to 24h (18h – midnight). The program for kids starts on Friday and Saturday already at 15h.
- All artists perform on all three nights Thursday, Friday and Saturday, no exceptions. No artists are scheduled for only a single night.
- As a rule, all artists do three sets a night (15-40 min. each). Shows of fixed lengths will be integrated into the scheduling accordingly. Shorter gigs (15-20 min.) can be performed in four sets.
Music: as a rule 35-40 min. each set.
„Visual“ acts (street performance, theatre, dance, acrobatics, puppet theatre etc.): as a rule 15 -30 min. max. each, ideally approx. 20 min.

Venues, Performing Spots

- Buskers Bern takes place in Berne's Lower Old Town (Unesco Cultural World Heritage) between the Clock Tower (Zytglogge) and Nydegg.
- There are about 25 pitches chosen as venues for performances in the streets, under the arcades, on squares and in parks, a third of which are equipped with simple stages, some roofed.
- The groups change venue after each set (rotation system), which is why they should make sure they are highly mobile (hand carts/trolleys). The whole Festival area is car-free. Groups using sophisticated technical gear will still have to change location once a night and thus can perform twice in one spot. Stationary acts will need to make special arrangements with Buskers Bern.

Travel expenses

- Buskers Bern covers travel expenses according to agreement.
- Travel expenses from and to further places outside Europe (overseas) cannot be covered by Buskers Bern alone (possibility of sharing with other festival organisations).

Fees / Hat Money

- Buskers Bern does not pay any fees. The artists earn their own fees by passing around the hat. Experience shows this works extraordinarily well in Berne.

Accommodation

- Buskers Bern will cover accommodation costs for Thursday, Friday and Saturday night and, if necessary, an additional night on Wednesday. Buskers Bern can book further nights at favorable rates if needed and announced before July (to negotiate) - the cost, however, will have to be covered by the groups themselves. Double rooms or rooms with three beds in good mid-range hotels will be provided. Groups will not be mixed.
- Buskers Bern doesn't book single rooms (except for artists travelling alone).
- Buskers Bern will only cover accommodation for performing members of groups (not managers, friends or family). We are very happy to help organize extra accommodation for the latter, though.

Food

- Buskers Bern provides a substantial three-course dinner on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday night.
- On Thursday there will be a buffet at noon (Quick lunch). On Friday and Saturday, a rich brunch buffet will be provided (12h to 14h). Breakfast is provided at some (not all) of the hotels as well.
- There will be a farewell lunch on Sunday midday (12h to 14h) for all artists still present.
- By prior arrangement with Buskers Bern, persons accompanying the groups may join in these meals at a reduced price.

Technical Equipment / Infrastructure

- Performing groups can play unplugged or amplified. Large-scale amplification is to be avoided. Monitor speakers are to be limited to a minimum.
- There are no sound technicians at the groups' disposal. In urgent cases our team of technicians can help solve technical problems. All technical equipment and other material is shifted from venue to venue by the groups themselves using hand carts. The whole Festival area is car-free.
- Electricity (220V) is provided at all performing venues (swiss plugs!)
- All performing venues are lit simply.

Merchandising

- The performers can sell their CDs, DVDs and other articles of merchandise in connection with their show at the Festival. Buskers Bern are happy to make recommendations on pricing.

Further information on the Festival

- There is no OFF-Festival in Berne. Only groups invited and scheduled by Buskers Bern are permitted to perform at the Festival.
- Buskers Bern schedules about 35-40 groups made up of about 150 artists from all over the world - roughly half are musical, and half 'visual' acts (theatre, puppet theatre, street performance, acrobatics, etc.). The organizing team comprises around 40 staff and 300 volunteers. 60 food stalls sell delicious food to the public. Buskers Bern is a private association.
- Buskers Bern endeavors to ensure very good communication. The Festival is attended by a large and varied segment of the population, in particular many families, as well as elder people (50'000-75'000 visitors over the three days). The existing system of collecting hat money is communicated very clearly every year and works superbly, as all the sixteen previous editions of the Festival have shown.
- The whole Festival area is openly accessible to anyone – no entrance fee is charged. All visitors are asked to support the organization by voluntarily buying the Festival bracelet including the program booklet (at Fr. 10.-; 20.- or 30.-, CHF 5.- for kids).
- From midnight until 3h30 on Thursday and until 6h on Friday and Saturday the Buskers House opens its doors. It is a party venue with bars and a stage where the buskers, festival staff and the public can celebrate. Each night two or three Festival bands are scheduled to play a set of 40 min. The space holds 500 people, the entrance fee is modest. People holding a Festival badge are admitted for free and at any time (even when the house is full).
- Buskers Bern does not hold any competitions (prize-giving, public's favorites, etc.).
- Possible travel expenses are reimbursed in Swiss Francs in cash on Friday and Saturday afternoon.
- Small change from the hat money in Swiss Francs can be changed for bills with Buskers Bern (only for foreign bands). Changing the bills into foreign currencies can be done at the official foreign exchange spots (e.g. at Berne main station, which is open on Sunday as well).
- In case of rain Buskers Bern will not pay compensation. Much of the Festival will take place under the arcades (along most streets) and still works very well as experience has shown. Some venues are even covered or are inside a tent; for some venues there are indoor alternatives. Some shows may have to be cancelled in case of rain.

Application

At Buskers Bern nearly all artists are professional and make their living from their art. There is no application form, nor is there an official closing date. Scheduling will usually be completed by the end of May.

Please send all application material via e-mail to the address given below. Short e-mails with a clear subject heading and containing useful direct links (especially to live videos) are preferred. We are particularly interested in clear indications of genre, style, present line-up, tour plans and release dates of CDs, etc.

Please do not call us on the phone. Thank you for your understanding.

Buskers Bern
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Christine Wyss, Head of Festival and artistic manager
Julia Wietlisbach, artistic manager

Berne, Oktober, 2022